

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office objects to the first full paragraph on page 1 of the Specification as it “fails to provide the relationship of the various applications to which priority is claimed in the first sentence of the specification”. The Office makes a number of suggestions to overcome the objection. Applicants appreciate the suggestions and incorporate all of the suggestions in the revised paragraph presented above.

Claims 1-26 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4, 6, 7, 21 and 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bates et al. (USP 5,352,744). Claims 2, 3, 8-20, 22 and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 27 was cancelled in an earlier response. The Office does not indicate the status of Claim 5. In order to be fully responsive without incurring any delay in seeking clarification of the correct status of Claim 5, Applicants adopt a conservative approach in this paper and treat Claim 5 as if it were rejected by the Office.

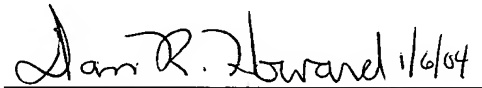
Applicants present no amendments in this paper. As such, they believe that the Revised Amendment Practice under 37 CFR 1.121 does not require a complete listing of the claims as there is no change from the version submitted with the prior response mailed 26 August 2003. Accordingly, this paper includes no claim listing.

In rejecting Claims 1, 4-7, 21 and 23-25, the Office suggests that Bates et al. “discloses the combination of a number of materials with his fully hydrogenated block copolymers such as ordinary styrene/diene block copolymers” and refers Applicants to Table 2. Applicants respectfully question the Office’s reading of Table 2 as they see no combination of a fully hydrogenated block copolymer (H₂ VECTOR™ 4111) with an ordinary styrene/diene block copolymer (Either non-hydrogenated VECTOR™ 4111 or KRATON™ G 1657) in Table 2. They also find no suggestion for such a combination in the claims or in the balance of the Bates et al. specification. Finally, they find no teaching or suggestion in Bates et al. of the

conversion of any Bates et al. composition into a fiber. Bates et al. focus, instead, upon adhesive compositions.

Applicants respectfully suggest that the teachings of Bates et al. fail to establish prima facie obviousness, much less obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). The comments in the immediately preceding paragraph support their suggestion. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of Claims 1-26 at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



Dan R. Howard
Registration No. 30,070
Phone: (989) 636-7494

P. O. Box 1967
Midland, MI 48641-1967

DRH/ssp